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AUTHOR	Davoli, Mara, Ed.; Ferri, Gino, Ed.
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ABSTRACT

Three- to six-year-old children in the preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, worked on a project called "The City: Images, Ideas, and Theories," in which teachers investigated the children's ideas, hypotheses, and theories about cities in general and their own city in particular. Children's knowledge about the city was surveyed in conversation. Based on this project, the children were asked to be the interpreters and describers of their own city of Reggio Emilia by preparing a guide to the city. This book presents that guide. The initial section of the book introduces the city of Reggio Emilia, offers some thoughts on the nature of cities and on how children might help us understand cities, and provides an overview of the children's process of making the guide. The second and longest section of the book presents the children's guide in their words and pictures and in photographs of scenes from Reggio Emilia. A series of historical notes on some of the famous landmarks of the city is presented in the book's third section. The fourth section consists of a collection of essays by: (1) Sandra Piccinini, on children's wisdom; (2) Jerome Bruner, on the great value of Reggio Emilia; (3) Sergio Spaggiari, on how we might learn from children's understanding of the city; (4) Rolando Baldini and Vania Vecchi, on the way the children's work is presented in the guide; (5) Tullio Zini, on children's views of the architecture and urban design of the city; (6) Marco Belpoliti, on some conditions of the modern city; and (7) Ermanno Cavazzoni, on some of the characteristics of Reggio Emilia. The fifth section explains how the research in the children's project was conducted. (BC)

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